

BOOKS

The Devil's Adjutant: Jochen Peiper, Panzer Leader by Michael Reynolds, Sarpidon Publishers, New York, 1995. 320 pages. \$27.50.

Decisive, ruthless, and fanatical, Colonel Jochen Peiper was the consummate panzer leader of the German Army in World War II. In the forests of the Ardennes in 1944, Peiper reached the high-water mark of his remarkable career as he led the spearhead of the German armored attack in the Battle of the Bulge. His tactical accomplishments are still studied by tankers today, but his other battlefield actions earned him a death sentence at the 1946 war crimes trials at Dachau.

Michael Reynolds' new book, *The Devil's Adjutant*, is a journeyman effort to portray Peiper as a dedicated soldier and a hapless victim. Reynolds is a retired British general officer, a reputed expert on the Battle of the Bulge, and an able writer. He has put together a well-crafted and detailed story, backed by excellent photographs, maps, American and German orders of battle, and other addenda.

Most of the book focuses on Peiper and his powerful *kampfgruppe* in December 1944, but it is actually his earlier years that are more interesting. Peiper quit high school in 1933 to join the "Liebstandarte Adolf Hitler," the regiment known as Hitler's bodyguard. Later in the war, the LAH became a full division, the 1st SS Panzer Division. Peiper quickly rose through the ranks to become an officer, serving as Heinrich Himmler's adjutant during the Polish campaign. His service with the infamous Himmler earned Peiper the label of "The Devil's Adjutant." With the LAH, Peiper fought in Holland, France, and Russia, distinguishing himself as an outstanding combat leader.

By 1943, the LAH had earned a well-deserved reputation for battlefield proficiency and courage, as well as a vicious reputation for brutal excess and atrocity. Peiper was groomed in this environment. Unfortunately, Reynolds does not spend much time with Peiper during these years, instead devoting his efforts to Peiper's involvement in the Ardennes.

In December 1944, Colonel Peiper commanded *Kampfgruppe* Peiper, the division's strongest regimental task force. Peiper's task was to lead the 6th Panzer Army's breakthrough attack through the Ardennes to the Meuse River. Here, the author reveals the strength of his research as he painstakingly details every aspect of Peiper's attack, as well as the frantic American countermeasures. The German attack was a complete surprise, and it initially gained momentum as it smashed weak, unprepared American units.

Reynolds provides expert analysis of German and American forces' strengths and weaknesses, plans, equipment, intelli-

gence, terrain and weather, as well as leadership and morale factors. Hour by hour, jumping from place to place on the battlefield, Reynolds moves the reader as the German attack slows and "friction and the fog of war" assume more dominance over the Germans and Americans. Peiper reacts as expected — decisive, resourceful, and imaginative, always focused on his objectives — despite bad weather, unfavorable terrain, missed opportunities, and an extra helping of bad luck.

Peiper's leadership pushes his *kampfgruppe* of tanks, armored infantry, pioneers, and artillery over 100 kilometers in 72 hours, deep behind American lines. It is during this push that Peiper's name would be indelibly linked to the horror of war, for it was Peiper's panzergrenadiers who executed unarmed American POWs at "the Malmedy Massacre." Peiper would ultimately be tried and sentenced to death for this atrocity.

Peiper survived the war, the trial, and prison, retiring to rural France and trying to live in obscurity. His remaining years are filled with controversy, highlighted by the violent and mysterious circumstances of his death in 1976.

This book is a well-researched account of one of World War II's most interesting combat leaders. Sadly, it is also a vehicle for the author to wearily debunk hundreds of previously accepted details and facts regarding the Battle of the Bulge. The constant correction of other authoritative sources is distracting and tiresome. The author's bias regarding Peiper's treatment by the Allies after the war is also an ill-disguised (and unconvincing) attempt to portray Peiper as an unwitting victim of war's cruelty and injustice. Despite these flaws, however, this is a fascinating story of inspired courage, battlefield flexibility, and combat leadership.

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Ticket to Hell by R. Frank Harwood, Southern International Research Press, P.O. Box 1323, Oxford, Miss. 38655, 162 pages. \$21.00.

On the surface, this book seemed to offer a good story: a biography of a hotdog P-47 pilot who grew up in the rural South, went to flight school, flew close air support for Patton's Third Army, and was shot down during an attack on the Mannheim railroad yards during the Battle of the Bulge. He was a prisoner of war from December 1944 until liberation in April 1945.

Unfortunately, that about covers it. The book, which could have told a great deal about each of these aspects of L. Thomas

Easterling's life, is amateurishly written and lacks any sort of depth. By the time the reader develops an interest in one phase (his trials as an underclassman in flight school, his aerial gunnery training, his experiences flying close air support in built-up areas of Eastern France and Western Germany), the author moves on to something else. The result is an unsatisfied hunger for more of what was just covered but is now a memory.

To make matters worse, the author includes "romantic" interludes (presumably based on fact) intended to spice up the tale. These do not add to the story. Instead, they tend to distract while contributing to the amateurish impression of the rest of the work.

However, after completing this book and thinking about it, I was struck by an image of my father and his generation that served in World War II. This image grew with reflection, and is the book's one redeeming strength. It gives a very strong impression of the simpler, more straightforward life and times of the people who fought in that war. More specifically, it shows the background of a "typical" man who could come from a rural, one-horse town, barely finish high school, and become a pilot in one of the toughest aircraft of the war. He did not have a lot of technical training, but did have a lot of experience driving cars, being self-reliant, and having suffered hardships through the Depression. Consequently, when Easterling breaks both legs bailing out of his aircraft over the rail yards in Mannheim and suffers through six months of captivity with no medical attention, we know how he manages to maintain the will to survive. More importantly, we know something of what is necessary to develop soldiers of character who could survive similar trials in the future.

Consequently, the book would be a good one to take on a long airplane flight: not too much meat, not too long to read, but an interesting picture of another generation's world and how it prepared them for war.

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Savage Peace: Americans at War in the 1990s by Daniel Bolger, Presidio Press, Novato, Calif., 1995. 420 pages. \$27.95.

As American military forces deploy to the former Yugoslavia, Daniel Bolger's *Savage Peace* offers some timely and pertinent conclusions about Operations Other Than War (OOTW) that leaders from lieutenant to lieutenant colonel should wrestle with. Bolger's message here is especially pertinent for the tank/heavy infantry community:

he concludes they have a real and necessary part in operations that have been misleadingly labeled as something other than war. After an introductory chapter describing how small unit leaders along the DMZ in Korea confront situations fraught with peril, even in time of "peace," the author takes a quick look at the New World Order and the United States military's training to confront the new challenges. Case studies illustrating success in OOTW include PROVIDE COMFORT in Northern Iraq, and the initial U.S. actions in Somalia as part of UNITAF. Case studies illustrating failure include the 24th Marine Amphibious Unit's (MAU) mission in Lebanon, which culminated in the disastrous and tragic bombing of the marine barracks in Beirut, and Task Force Ranger's mauling in the streets of Mogadishu during UNISOM II's undeclared war on Muhammed Farah Aidid. Along the way, Bolger derives some fundamental conclusions concerning the reasons for success, and failure in OOTW.

Savage Peace's message, that leaders from sergeant to lieutenant colonel are on the cutting edge of all this and their actions can have strategic implications, is hardly new, but Bolger's basic thesis challenges the fundamental definition inherent in OOTW and may prove to be the book's greatest contribution. The author contends that these leaders in the field, and their military and political masters, must realize that "OOTW are wars pure and simple — to believe otherwise is to court disaster." Thus, the 24th MAU's fundamental failure, Bolger argues, was that its leadership did not believe their mission was military in nature, so they didn't consider standard battlefield tactics applicable. PROVIDE COMFORT stands as a counterpoint wherein conventional forces, by doing the regular shoot, move, and communicate METL stuff, allowed the engineers, medics, and logisticians to do the bulk of the humanitarian work, and do it well.

Bolger asserts that our opponents have only to look at the historical record, from the Ia Drang Valley to the desert of Southwest Asia, to see the fate of those who try to fight the United States military in an operational and strategic manner that is inside the tidy box we like to call warfare. Bolger concludes that we must be ready to fight, but outside the box at the operational and strategic level. However, since Bolger's OOTW are really wars with a different face, we must still employ a force package prepared mentally and structurally to fight in the traditional style at the tactical level. Thus, OOTW force packages should be combined arms and joint — not just airpower, not just SOF, not just light infantry.

Several warnings fall out of Bolger's analysis that are especially pertinent in light of the debate over potential deployments. One recurrent theme is the interaction between the American military, the media, the people, and our politicians. The author

warns that media-driven policy can result in commitment of military forces without due consideration of such questions as purpose, method, end-state, and level of risk. Bolger contends that "civilian policy makers often do not think in these terms, and it is up to the military to ask, and keep on asking, these tough questions." Another, and more controversial, warning concerns the quest for easy answers to hard problems. The author argues that, much like airpower advocates in the '30s and '50s, the Special Operations community offered Task Force Ranger to policy makers as a quick and easy solution to the problem posed by Aidid in Somalia. Once the element of surprise was compromised by media coverage, this solution was essentially doomed to failure, despite the Task Force's endeavors, which were in keeping with the highest traditions of American military arms. Televised images of the bodies of American servicemen being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu caused a collapse in the will of the American people and the President and serves as an example to support another of Bolger's conclusions. Since the seemingly omnipresent electronic media serve as a direct link between "trigger pullers" and policy makers, journalists "play a huge role in giving tactical events operational and strategic significance." After pointing out the significance of this relationship, Bolger moves on with little comment, even though the situation seems to bode ill given the current adversarial relationship between the American military and our own media.

Bolger's writing style makes it somewhat difficult to determine the target audience. *Savage Peace* is certainly pertinent for any leader from platoon to battalion level heading to Bosnia or another OOTW/war. However, his analysis of larger issues, such as the integration and implementation of national interests, goals, and objectives, makes it equally valuable reading for military/civilian policy makers and students at the war and staff colleges. Unfortunately, the book is replete with glib phrases such as "the final sanction — one between the eyes," and "the day of the ninja had come." While such verbiage may make the message more appealing to junior officers and NCOs, it runs the risk of alienating the higher level audience, which would be unfortunate. Daniel Bolger is one of our foremost soldier/historians and freely admits he runs the risk of analyzing events so current that they hardly merit the label history. Further examination may refute some of Bolger's conclusions, but he warns that "great powers must study small wars to stay great," and analysis of these recent wars offer lessons of immediate utility so the effort cannot be left undone.

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A Short History of the Civil War by James L. Stokesbury, William Morrow & Company, Inc., New York, 1995. 354 pages, \$25.00.

It is with great pleasure that I recommend *A Short History of the Civil War* as an addition to the professional library of the armor/cavalry corps. This book is extremely informative, and yet most enjoyable to read. The author, who is a professor at Acadia University, has seven other books, five of which are *A Short History of...*'s, to his credit. The book is indeed a handy, useful reference, as well as an introduction to the American Civil War, for students of military history. This book will undoubtedly be used as a text in many colleges and universities.

The book opens with the election of Republican Abraham Lincoln as president of the United States. From there, the author discusses the causes and events which led to Lincoln's election, the subsequent secession of the Confederacy, and the war itself. He is very logical as he discusses each of the war's five years. For each year, the author explains the what, where, when, why, and how events transpired. His answers to these questions are clear and concise, and seem to be accurate. Likewise, the reader will become very acquainted with the men who fought in this war. Additionally, the author is careful to stress how society and war are not mutually exclusive, but rather have enormous impact on each other.

The eleven maps, which are relevant to the issues being discussed, are understandable, but lack detail. This is the only shortcoming I could find with this text. An index is provided and is very complete. Additionally, he provides a section entitled "Suggestions for Further Reading," which includes commentary.

A Short History of the Civil War does not bore the reader with too much detail; rather, the quick pace grips the reader with anticipation and excitement. I enjoyed reading it very much.

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OPERATION DESERT STORM: Allied Ground Forces Order of Battle by Thomas D. Dinackus, (Self-Published), Alexandria, Va., 1995.

The author, a former Armor officer and *ARMOR* contributor, has self-published a comprehensive order of battle listing all U.S. combat arms units, down to the smallest TOE element, and major non-combat arms units. This will meet a need for those students of the conflict that cannot wait for

an official Army or Marine Corps order of battle. Another chapter lists the forces that made up the Allied coalition.

The book is available from the author for \$16 plus \$1.75 postage. His address is 4719 Major Court, Alexandria, Va. 22312.

ARMOR Staff

Leaders and Battles: The Art of Military Leadership by W.J. Wood, Presidio Press, 1995. 337 pages, maps, bibliography. \$15.95.

This is not a new book; it was first published in 1984 and has just been republished as a paperback. But it is certainly entertaining and interesting, as well as a first-rate teaching tool, particularly for the new student of military history.

The author has three objectives: "The first is to show Americans that battles can be won by the minds of leaders, those who are skilled in the art of leadership. The second is to demonstrate that the art of leadership is embodied in the man, not in some set of abstractions. The third is to establish that the art must be based on certain attributes which are found in leaders who have proved themselves in battle."

To do this, Wood adapted an unusual approach. He selected "certain attributes" — courage, will, intellect, presence, and energy — that he wanted to illustrate. Then after obviously prodigious research, he culled incidents in military history to those few that typified a particular attribute. Some of these historical moments are well known: Auerstadt, Ratisbon, Little Big Horn. Others are so obscure — Cempoella, Ilipa, Lungtungpen — that you wonder how Wood ever discovered them. The men involved are not all great captains; most are just fine soldiers who happened to have the attributes Wood was seeking, and who rose to the challenge in the stress of battle. But the examples are perfect for his purposes.

Then Wood created a novel-like scenario for each incident. He created dialogue that would be similar to what was actually said, and actions that must have taken place, and he put it all together like an historical novel. This makes easy and entertaining reading, even while the reader's mind is absorbing Wood's theses. This is the way history ought to be taught, much like the way *PS Magazine* teaches maintenance. Wood brings "dull history" to life in an exciting and fascinating way. A fine book. Get it and enjoy it. And someday in a spirited discussion with your friends, you may find yourself using Wood's examples to prove your point!

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